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Control: 3850

MAR 6, 1962

12:27 PM

FROM: MOSCOW

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 2350, MARCH 6, 4 P.M. (SECTION ONE OF TWO)

PRIORITY

EYES ONLY FOR SECRETARY

AT MEETING WITH GROMYKO THIS MORNING I READ OPENING STATEMENT COMPOSED FROM POINTS 5, 7, 8, 9, AND 10 OF MY INSTRUCTIONS, DEPTEL 1998. HOWEVER, IN OPENING PARAGRAPH, IN ADDITION REFERRING TO SEPTEMBER 20 JOINT STATEMENT REGARDING NEED REFRAIN FROM ACTIONS AGGRAVATING INTERNATIONAL TENSIONS, I ADDED WE ARE SURPRISED SOVIETS HAVE ATTEMPTED TO DISRUPT EXISTING ARRANGEMENTS IN AIR CORRIDORS JUST AT TIME WHEN WE ARE DISCUSSING POSSIBILITY OF NEW ARRANGEMENTS. "THIS IS CERTAINLY NOT CALCULATED TO INSPIRE CONFIDENCE IN ANY SUCH NEW ARRANGEMENTS." I SOFTENED SOMEWHAT SECTION IN POINT 8 OF INSTRUCTIONS ON SOVIET INTENTIONS, STATING IT "NOW APPEARS TO BE IN DOUBT" WHETHER PROCEDURAL FORMULA CAN BE FOUND.

I THEN PRESENTED MEMORANDUM WHICH WAS READ BY INTERPRETER.

GROMYKO RESPONDED FIRST ON AIR CORRIDORS. HE INSISTED THAT THE TENSIONS IN THE AIR CORRIDORS, WHICH "LIE IN THE AIR SPACE OF THE GDR", HAVE NOT BEEN CREATED BY SOVIETS, BUT BY WESTERN SIDE. HE SAID SOVIET ACTIONS ARE NOT IN CONTRADICTION TO EXISTING UNDERSTANDINGS AND THAT THEY CORRESPOND TO THE ESTABLISHED PRACTICE. IT WAS VAIN FOR WESTERN POWERS TO CLAIM THESE WERE UNEXPECTED AS IF THEY FELL DOWN FROM THE SKIES. IT IS CLEAR, HE CONTINUED, FROM YOUR STATEMENT THAT WESTERN SIDE HOLDS RATHER DIFFERENT VIEWS ON THIS. "BUT WE DENY TO WESTERN POWERS THE RIGHT OF ARBITERS IN THAT QUESTION AND CANNOT AGREE THAT ONLY ONE SIDE--THE WESTERN SIDE--WILL ESTABLISH THE TRUTH." HE ADDED SOVIET POSITION IS LAID DOWN IN THEIR NOTE (FEBRUARY 17) AND SOVIET GOVT WILL CONTINUE ACT IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS POSITION. WARNED THAT IF ATTEMPTS ARE MADE AGGRAVATE SITUATION, SOVIET SIDE WILL DULY REPLY TO THEM.

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-2- 2350, MARCH 6, 4 P.M. (SECTION ONE OF TWO) FROM MOSCOW

GROMYKO THEN TURNED TO MY REMARKS THAT BOTH SIDES SHOULD REFRAIN FROM ACTIONS LIKELY AGGRAVATE TENSION. HE CLAIMED SOVIET SIDE IS IN CENTRAL EUROPE, AND BERLIN IN PARTICULAR, TENSION HAS ARISEN. THIS FACT, HE CLAIMED, ONLY UNDERLINES NECESSITY RESOLVE PRESENT DANGER SITUATION INVOLVING EXISTENCE ABNORMAL OCCUPATION REGIME. HE CONTINUED THAT SOVIET PROPOSALS WERE DESIGNED PRECISELY TO NORMALIZE THIS PROBLEM IN THE INTEREST OF REDUCING TENSION IN GERMANY, EUROPE, AND WHOLE WORLD.

GROMYKO EXPRESSED HOPE THAT AGREEMENT BETWEEN US WILL BE REACHED ON ALL MATTERS RELATED TO CONCLUSION GERMAN PEACE TREATY. AGAIN WARNED THAT IF THIS IS NOT DONE SOVIET UNION AND OTHER STATES WILL SIGN PEACE TREATY WITH GDR. "THIS IS ABSOLUTELY INEVITABLE." GROMYKO SAID IT WOULD BE A GOOD THING IF WESTERN POWERS WOULD APPROPRIATELY EVALUATE FACT SOVIET UNION HAS NOT YET SIGNED PEACE TREATY. THIS IS BEING DONE IN ORDER FACILITATE AGREEMENT. HOWEVER, POSITION USG AND STATEMENTS MADE TODAY, HE CONTINUED, INDICATE THAT THE SOVIET POSITION IS NOT PROPERLY UNDERSTOOD. GROMYKO THEN REPEATED THAT SOVIET GOVT WILL NEVER AGREE TO ANY ARRANGEMENT WHICH WILL PERPETUATE MAINTENANCE OCCUPATION REGIME WEST BERLIN OR THE ABNORMAL SITUATION IN EUROPE CHARACTERIZED BY ABSENCE PEACE TREATY. HE EMPHASIZED A PEACE TREATY WOULD NOT BE MERELY SLIP OF PAPER WITH SIGNATURES, BUT WOULD BE AN ACTION BY WHICH APPROPRIATE QUESTIONS WOULD BE SOLVED.

GROMYKO THEN STATED SOVIET POSITION WEST BERLIN ALREADY QUITE CLEAR. FREE CITY PROPOSAL IN SOVIET VIEW WOULD VIOLATE INTEREST OF NEITHER SIDE. THAT IS, IF THESE INTERESTS ARE UNDERSTOOD CORRECTLY, NAMELY THE INTEREST OF REDUCING TENSION AND STRENGTHENING PEACE. SOMETIMES, HOWEVER, PEOPLE SPEAK OF INTEREST ONLY IN A VERY NARROW WAY. HE COMPLAINED DOSSIERS OF WESTERN POWERS APPEAR TO BE FULL OF UNFOUNDED SUSPICIONS WHICH WOULD BE BETTER ELIMINATED.

GROMYKO RESTATED EARLIER POINT THAT SOVIET POSITION SPECIFICALLY INCLUDES POSSIBILITY OF REACHING AGREEMENT ON ACCESS WHICH WOULD RESPECT GDR SOVEREIGNTY TOGETHER WITH RESOLUTION OF A NUMBER OF OTHER QUESTIONS WHICH HE HAD MENTIONED MANY TIMES. ALSO SAID SOME WESTERN CIVIL AND MILITARY LEADERS CONTINUE TO USE STRONG WORDS AGAINST SOVIET GOVT, OTHERS CONTRIBUTING TO EXACERBATION TENSIONS.

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-3- 2350, MARCH 6, 1948 P.M. (SECTION ONE OF TWO) FROM MOSCOW

HE THEN CHARACTERIZED US MEMORANDUM IN GENERAL AS ATTEMPT TO BALANCE DISCUSSIONS HELD TO DATE IN SUCH A WAY AS TO SUPPORT US POSITIONS. THIS DID NOT FACILITATE AGREEMENT, BUT RATHER CONSTRUCTED A TRENCH DIVIDING OUR POSITIONS. ADDED HE WOULD NOT AGAIN REPEAT SOVIET POSITIONS ON ALL-BERLIN SOLUTION, PLEBISCITE PROPOSAL, OR IAA. CONCLUDED THAT IT IS CLEAR WE HAVE DIFFERENT APPROACHES TO NEGOTIATIONS ON THIS QUESTION AND EXPRESSED DIFFICULTY IN RECONCILING ASSERTIONS IN MEMORANDUM WITH STATEMENT US SERIOUSLY SEEKING AGREEMENT. HE EXPLAINED THE ABOVE WERE HIS REACTIONS ON BASIS OF HAVING LISTENED TO HASTY TRANSLATION OF MEMORANDUM, IMPLYING THAT THIS MIGHT NOT EXHAUST SOVIET REACTION TO THE

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Action

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Info

FROM: MOSCOW

TO: Secretary of State

NO: 2350, MARCH 6, 4 P.M. (SECTION TWO OF TWO)

PRIORITY

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MEMORANDUM.

I RESPONDED BY FIRST TAKING UP GROMYKO'S REFERENCES TO AIR CORRIDORS. I STATED SURPRISE AT HIS CONTENTION SITUATION RESULTS FROM WESTERN ACTIONS, POINTING OUT THAT SOVIETS HAD SUDDENLY CHANGED PROCEDURES WHICH HAD EXISTED 16 YEARS AND IN SUCH A WAY AS TO DISTURB OUR ACCESS. I NOTED HIS REFERENCE TO SOVIET FEBRUARY 17 NOTE AND STATED WE HAD FOUND THIS RESPONSE UNSATISFACTORY. I EXPLAINED I DID NOT INTEND TO TAKE THIS UP IN DETAIL TODAY BUT ADDED I HAD NO DOUBT MY GOVERNMENT WOULD PURSUE THE MATTER FURTHER. I POINTED OUT THAT THE AIR CORRIDORS WERE ESTABLISHED TO PROVIDE FREE ACCESS TO WEST BERLIN AND THAT RECENT SOVIET ACTIONS CLEARLY SEEMED DESIGNED TO INTERFERE WITH THIS FREE ACCESS. I WARNED THAT WE TAKE A MOST SERIOUS VIEW OF SUCH ACTIONS.

I EMPHASIZED OUR DESIRE AVOID LEGALISTIC DISCUSSION WHILE DEALING PRAGMATICALLY WITH FACTUAL PROBLEMS WHICH WOULD ARISE FROM ANNOUNCED SOVIET INTENTIONS. I REITERATED OUR CONVICTION THAT RESOLUTION PROBLEMS IN QUESTION IS IMPOSSIBLE WITHOUT SATISFACTORY AGREEMENT ON ACCESS. I STATED IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING YOU WOULD EXPECT TO HAVE DISCUSSIONS WITH GROMYKO ON BERLIN IN GENEVA AND, FURTHER, THAT YOU WOULD BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS WIDER SUBJECTS ON AN INFORMAL AND BILATERAL BASIS. I EMPHASIZED THAT DISCUSSION SUCH PROBLEMS WOULD REMAIN SUBJECT TO THE NEED FOR A STRONG AND CLEAR SETTLEMENT ON ACCESS AND PRESERVATION RIGHTS IN WEST BERLIN. I POINTED OUT THAT THIS DOES NOT REPRESENT ANY CHANGE IN OUR POSITION ON THE QUESTION OF ACCESS AS THE KEY PROBLEM WHICH MUST BE TAKEN UP FIRST BUT EXPLAINED THAT THE PRESIDENT PERSONALLY IS DETERMINED TO LEAVE NO METHOD OF DISCUSSION UNTRIED IN SEEKING A SENSIBLE ACCOMMODATION OF RIGHTS AND INTERESTS BOTH SIDES.

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-2- 2350, MARCH 5, 1961 (SECTION TWO OF TWO) FROM MOSCOW
REGARDING GROMYKO'S REMARKS ABOUT NECESSITY RESPECT GDR
SOVEREIGNTY, I COMPLAINED OF THEIR VAGUENESS AND FACT WE
HAVE NEVER CLEARLY BEEN ABLE UNDERSTAND WHAT THIS INVOLVES.
I POINTED OUT THAT WHENEVER WE SEEM TO REACH POINT OF
ACHIEVING SOME AGREEMENT, GROMYKO RETURNS TO QUESTION GDR
SOVEREIGNTY IN SUCH A WAY AS TO NEGATE WHAT SEEMED TO HAVE
BEEN AN AGREEMENT.

I THEN EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER GROMYKO'S STATEMENT THEY WOULD
NEVER AGREE TO ANY ACCORD WHICH WOULD RESULT IN PERPETUATION
OCCUPATION REGIME OR "ABNORMAL SITUATION, I.E., ABSENCE
PEACE TREATY." THIS POSITION, I STATED, IS THE MOST SERIOUS
AND DISCOURAGING STATEMENT FROM SOVIET SIDE IF IT REFERS
TO QUESTIONS OF FACT. I POINTED OUT WE HAVE EMPHASIZED
WE WERE NOT ASKING FOR ANY FORMAL SOVIET ACTION CONNECTED
WITH OCCUPATION REGIME, BUT IF ANY AGREEMENT BETWEEN US
WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE IF AFTER IT THE OCCUPATION REGIME
IN FACT CONTINUED TO EXIST, THEN WE WOULD SEEM TO HAVE
REALLY REACHED AN IMPASSE. I CONCLUDED THAT WESTERN POWERS
HAVE MADE IT ABUNDENTLY CLEAR THAT THEIR PRESENCE IN
BERLIN WILL NOT BE GIVEN UP UNTIL THE GERMAN QUESTION
IF FINALLY RESOLVED.

GROMYKO DID NOT PURSUE THIS LAST POINT BUT RETURNED BRIEFLY
TO QUESTION AIR CORRIDORS, STATING HE WOULD NOT REPEAT HIMSELF
WITH RESTATEMENT SOVIET POSITION. IT WAS WELL KNOWN AND THEY
INTENDED TO ACT IN CONFORMITY WITH IT. AS TO MY ONE-SIDED
ASSERTIONS THAT THE SOVIET UNION HAD TAKEN NEW ACTION
VIOLATING AGREED FOUR-POWER REGULATIONS, THEY HAVE STUDIED
AGREEMENTS EXISTING SINCE WW II AND THEIR ACTIONS DO NOT
CONFLICT IN ANY WAY WITH THE CONDITIONS EXISTING THERE.
HE REPEATED, "WE DO NOT AGREE THAT THE ONLY ARBITERS IN
THIS SITUATION SHALL BE THE WESTERN POWERS."

REGARDING MY COMMENTS ON GDR SOVEREIGNTY, GROMYKO RECALLED
THAT WE OFTEN REFER TO SOVIET USE OF THE PHRASE CONCERNING
NECESSITY RESPECT GDR SOVEREIGNTY. HE STATED THAT IS NOT
ONLY A PHRASE, IT WAS AN IMPORTANT CONDITION. HE CLAIMED
THAT SOVIET PROPOSALS WERE IN COMPLETE ACCORD WITH "INTERNATIONAL
PRACTICE BAPTISED BY YEARS OF INTERNATIONAL USAGE." HE
REPEATED THAT ANY AGREEMENT ON AIR, LAND, OR WATER ACCESS MUST
BE IN ACCORD WITH RESPECT FOR GDR SOVEREIGNTY. "TO UNDER-
ESTIMATE THIS WOULD BE A BIG MISTAKE WHICH WE HOPE
WESTERN POWERS WILL AVOID." HE REITERATED THAT SOVIET GOVT
BELIEVES IT IS POSSIBLE TO RECONCILE AGREEMENT FOR "UNRESTRICTED
ACCESS" WITH GDR SOVEREIGNTY.

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-3- 2350, MARCH 6 4:15 P.M. (SECTION TWO OF TWO) FROM MOSCOW

GROMYKO WAS ABVIOUSLY PREOCCUPIED AND PRESSED FOR TIME AND I THEREFORE DID NOT PROBE FURTHER. I ANTICIPATE NO FURTHER MEETING BEFORE GENEVA ALTHOUGH WAY IS OPEN FOR HIM TO COMMENT FURTHER ON OUR MEMORANDUM IF HE SO DESIRES.

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